

Certified Boater Program

Education and Certification



What are Aquatic Invasive Species?

- Aquatic invasive species (AIS) are plants, animals and diseases that are not native to Montana.
- They cause harm to the environment, economy and human health.
- AIS are easily spread from one water body to another by human activity, including boating.
- Anyone who works or plays in or around water can unknowingly transport AIS on their boats and equipment.
- Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) is part of a strong partnership of public and private stakeholders in Montana committed to an effective strategy of prevention, containment and control of AIS.



New Zealand Mud Snail

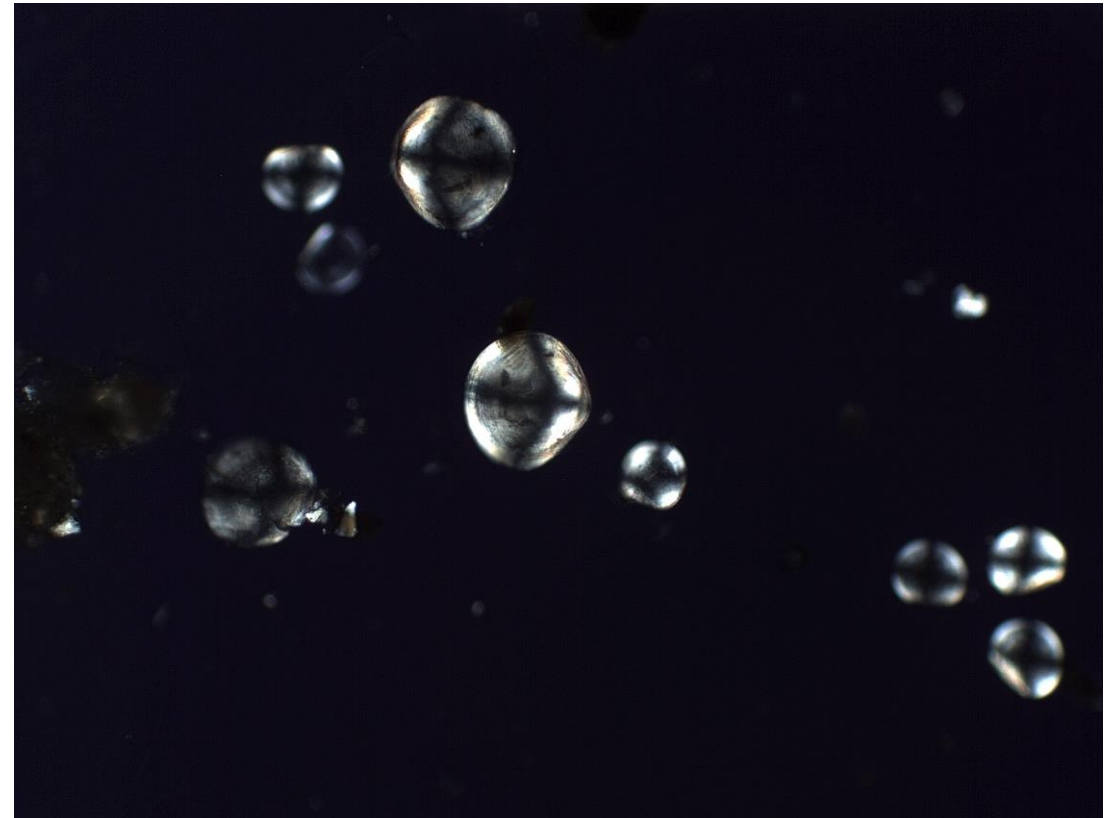
Major Aquatic Invasive Species in Montana

- Zebra/Quagga mussels
- New Zealand mudsnails
- Eurasian watermilfoil
- Flowering Rush
- Curlyleaf pondweed
- Hydrilla



Mussels in Montana

- In October 2016 invasive mussel larvae were discovered for the first time in Montana
 - **Tiber Reservoir – confirmed positive**
 - **Canyon Ferry Reservoir – unconfirmed suspect**
- In response to those discoveries, all watercraft (motorized and non-motorized) exiting these lakes will require decontamination upon exit of the waterbody.
- The Certified Boater Program was designed to ease the inspection process for boaters who recreate primarily at Canyon Ferry OR Tiber each season.
- MT FWP is concerned about many different Aquatic Invasive Species in addition to mussels.



Dreissenid mussel larvae

Why you should care?

ALS can impact you in many ways:

- Aquatic invasive plants create dense mats impacting boat movement.
- Mussels clog irrigation pipes and infest hydropower dams, thus increasing your rates.
- ALS disrupt the way organisms interact and could alter the fish community.

You can make a difference!

What is the Certified Boater Program?



- The program is applicable only for Canyon Ferry **OR** Tiber Reservoirs
- It will allow you to avoid the need for full inspection or hot wash if your next boating trip is on the same waterbody.
- The purpose of the program is to decrease volume at the decontamination stations.
- The program allows FWP to focus efforts on boats traveling between many different waterbodies.

How Do I Join the Program?



- You must complete this training course with greater than 80% correct answers.
- Your best option is to register and take the test online and decals will be mailed to you.
- Second option is to go to an FWP office to register, take the test, sign a contract and receive your certified boater decals and protocol.
- Adhere strictly to all rules and regulations associated with the certified boater program.
- You are only valid when all decals are correctly displayed. One on either side of the stern and one on the back of the trailer where it is visible (when applicable).

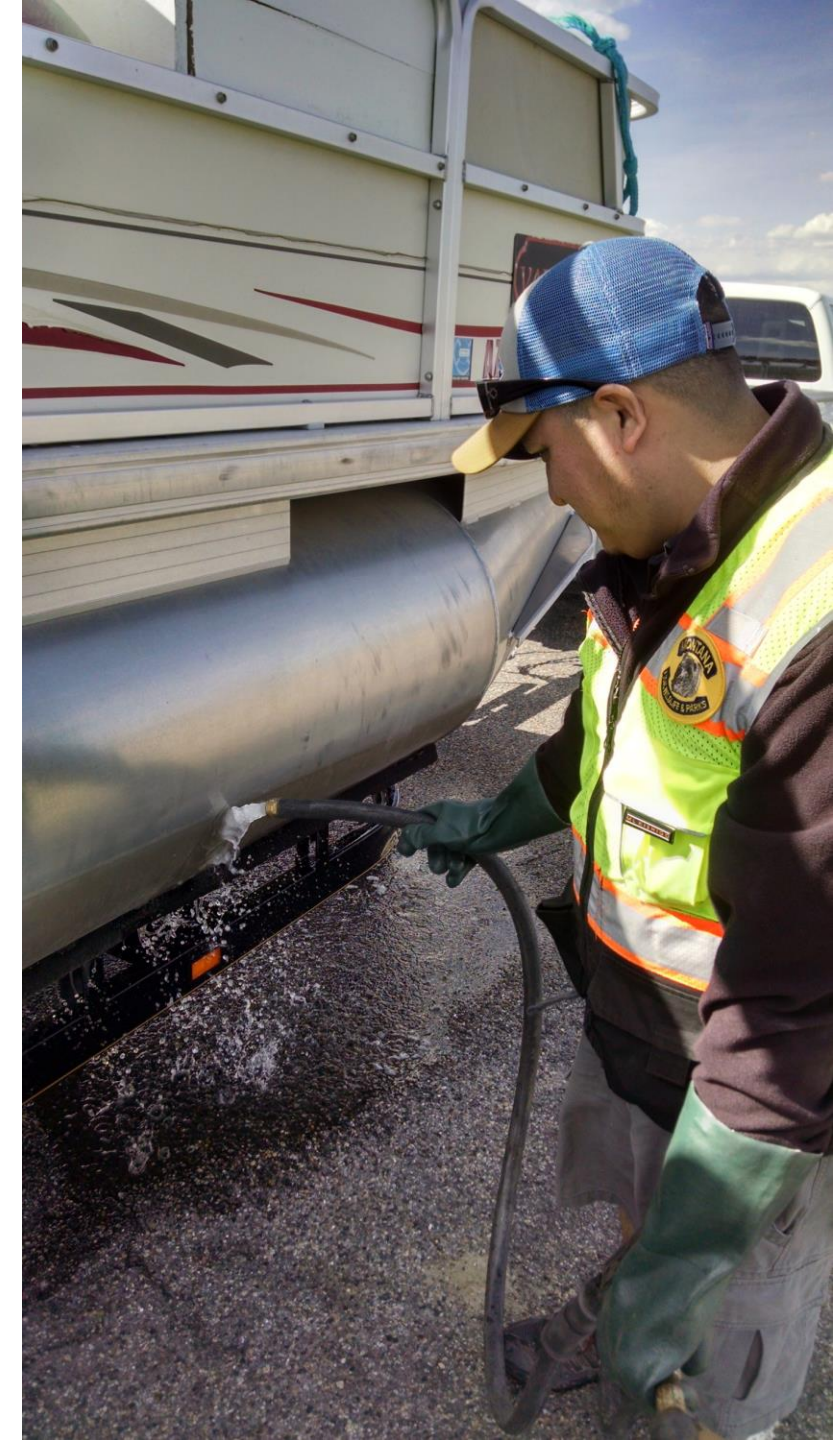


**CHOOSE EITHER BACK BUMPER OR
FENDER FOR TRAILER DECAL**



Boaters, Anglers, Paddlers

- Completely remove all mud, vegetation, and water before leaving the access area.
- Inspect your boat, trailer, and all gear. Pay attention to crevices and hidden areas (Bilges, live wells, compartments).
- Remove all vegetation (by hand or sprayer).
- Remove all mud (use a pressurized power sprayer, found at most do-it-yourself car washes).
 - The hot water kills organisms and the pressure removes mud and vegetation.
 - No need to use chemicals or soap.
- Dispose of debris in trash or on dry land away from water or ramp.



DRAIN.

- Water that remains in your boat after you leave the lake has the potential to transport invasive species such as mussels and pathogens.
- Make sure you completely drain and remove water from your boat.
 - Drop your motor
 - Pull your drain plug
 - Towel dry any compartments you cannot drain
 - Live wells, bilges, bait buckets, ballast bags and tanks
 - Dry all gear



DRY.

- Aquatic invaders do not survive in dry areas.
- Dry your watercraft and equipment.
 - Ropes
 - Waders
 - Buckets
 - Wakeboards
 - Wetsuits/life jacket
- Leave your watercraft, trailers, waders, and gear in the sun to dry when possible.



Enforcement


- FWP will be relying heavily on public to adhere to these rules and help with enforcement.
- Call TIP-MONT if you witness any violations
- Enforcement efforts will be increased across the state



How decontamination stations operate:

Decontamination stations primary function will be to inspect and hot wash boats leaving Canyon Ferry and Tiber Reservoirs.

There will be several steps to ensure the boat is ready to travel to another waterbody.

Step 1. Inspection of vessel to ensure 

Step 2. If necessary, hot wash a portion or all of the watercraft

Step 2 may be needed if it does not pass an inspection

Step 2 will be necessary in other scenarios such as:

- Complex boats with intakes that lead to internal engines or plumbing
- Boats with ballast tanks or ballast bags
- Boats moored for long periods of time in the suspect or positive water
- Little or no effort made by boat owner to

